

## THE GAME OF FOOT-BALL.

BY J. A. FORSYTHE  
ATHLETIC DIRECTOR.

Nearly ten years ago on a cold, drizzly day, the writer of this article stood in the grand stand at the Park in Columbia, and with about nine-tenths of the few hundred spectators present wondered what it all meant—what the two or two stalwart young fellows, representing Clemson and the University of South Carolina, were trying to do as they stood about in the mud, tugging and struggling for the possession of what appeared to be a huge, red mud ball. This was the first game of inter-collegiate foot ball that the writer had witnessed—in fact one of the first played South of the North Carolina line.

The game ended by the score of ten to five in Clemson's favor, and those of us who knew a little of base ball and nothing of foot ball, felt that our Champions had done gloriously. We had already yelled ourselves hoarse at we knew not what, but not contented with this, at the termination of the game, members of the faculty and the students alike, plunged out into the gridiron, ankle deep in Carolina mud and slush, and bore off the be-decked victors as if they had been indeed conquering heroes. It made no difference whether or not the game and its merits were understood; it was enough to know that our College had been victorious. This game was the first of those "Fair Week Contests" in Columbia which attract thousands of citizens and draw to the city thousands of visitors from all over the South. The growth and popularity of the game has indeed been phenomenal.

The writer left the field of the first of these contests convinced that this game of foot ball had done more to unify the Clemson student body; more to arouse college spirit and college pride, than all the athletic events in Clemson's history put together. He felt that the game had come to stay and to be deservedly the most important of her athletic sports. But he had some-how a self-congratulatory feeling that he did not belong to the team; he felt that, willing to lend his moral and financial support, he would rather some one else would do the playing for him. He tried to think of the many advantages offered by base ball, in which he was then deeply interested; its greater apparent gentility, its comparative lack of danger, all in all, it seemed a much nicer game for a young gentleman to engage in.

But fortunately our opinions are not like the laws of the Medes and Persians—a new session of base ball six months in the distance, a great college outburst of foot ball enthusiasm; and a year from the time, the writer had stood on the grand stand, and witnessed the first contest for foot ball supremacy, found him there again in a capacity, however, that did not permit of a seat on the grand stand.

Since then I have been found in the ranks of ball enthusiasts ready to believe anything good that is said of the game, and to resent any imputation on its character.

It has been my good fortune to serve for nearly ten years in the capacity of foot ball player, manager, and coach—to view the foot ball question from the standpoint of the student and the instructor, to teach the same men on the gridiron and in the class room; and I unhesitatingly make the statement based on these exceptional opportunities for learning both the good and the evil of the game, that I believe foot ball stands to-day as the greatest man-making game on the American Continent. View it from any standpoint you please—the physical, the mental, the moral, I am prepared to say and attempt to prove that it excites them all.

If you say that foot ball is comparatively dangerous sport, I challenge you to show that it is as fatal as bicycling, rowing, skating, or horse-back riding—if you say it is brutal or brutalizing, I say you know nothing of the very underlying principals of the game which

inculcate control of temper, and restraint of passion—if you say it is detrimental to a man's studying as a student, I challenge you to examine and compare the average record of the foot ball players with the average of those who do not play—more than this, I assert that on the basis of percent, there are a large number of leading college men, leading students, principal officers, on the college foot ball team than in the rest of the school. I claim that submit to the records, that the men who play foot ball make, as a whole, better grades during foot ball months than during the months of the session, due to the regular habits required by the training Code, and the activity of mind that accompanies activity of body.

I have no patience with the "arm chair" foot ball critic—a self-appointed here, who, with dogmatic self conceit, abuses a sport which he has not had the opportunity or perhaps the inclination to investigate. How often do we hear the adjectives "brutal"—"degrading"—"dangerous" applied to foot ball by persons who have never even seen a foot ball or a gridiron, or know absolutely nothing of how the game is played.

How often this year have we seen in our newspapers, lurid appeals to the legislature and college authorities to stop a sport, that to note their tone, you would imagine was as dangerous as a Boer regiment or Japanese Squadron. Legislation! what has a Legislature to do with a college boy's sport? It might as well arrogate to itself the right to stop bicycling, rowing, base ball or any other sport which does not imperil the public morals. The College authorities are the proper ones to decide whether or not participations in the game interferes with the work of a student, and the action of every college of note and standing is not only allowing but encouraging the game, leads to the conclusion that its beneficial effects are duly appreciated by those in a position to know what is best for the students, and that the fumings of the ignorant and malcontents have no foundation in fact. It has been my good fortune to see foot ball introduced into two colleges—I have noted in both instances an increased interest in college life, an awakening of college spirit, the greater pride taken by students and graduates in their Alma Mater. These two colleges have become known in other states and to other colleges. The students of different institutions have been brought together in a friendly combat, and an honorably, hard fought game creates a wholesome respect between the different bodies of students which could be brought about in no other way. To a young and growing University like this, nothing could be or is of more value as an advertising agency than its foot ball teams—an advertisement in its best sense—wherever her foot ball teams have played, they have left the impression that Florida men are gentlemen. It has been stated that the attendance at Yale and Princeton is always affected by the results of their great foot ball games. I heard some say, when this argument was made in a college paper, that students drawn in this way were not worth having, I must confess I do not share this view: when a student meets a young man desirous of entering college, and is endeavoring to persuade him to enter Alma Mater, what does he dwell most upon? The excellence of his teachers, the advantages of the courses offered? I think not! Would he not more likely speak to him of those things outside of the regular routine of work, that go to make college life attractive to the average young man—of the prestige of the foot ball and base ball teams, of the success of their orators, of their College Glee Club—are not these the most likely themes upon which the average students would dwell? Nor does the fact that such arguments decide the debating candidate, make the men any less desirable as college materials.

I believe that athletic sports have not only an important but a legitimate place in every college course. I do not believe in all work and no play for the student, even if that is the usual necessary lot of most instructors. I do not mean to be understood as saying that athletic sports should in any way interfere with the proper amount of college work and study, but I would be understood to say I do not believe that these should interfere with a certain amount of athletic sports. They should go hand in hand—both important and necessary, although by no means equally so, both occupying a legitimate place in the day, and in the thoughts and hearts of the students. The experiment of abolishing out door athletics has been tried by some few colleges, but let us rejoice in that the light has again dawned on most of them.

The game of foot ball trains the mind and muscles together. The movements of the game are as complicated as any on the chess board, which latter requires only the mental efforts to be executed: a man engaged in a game of foot ball is taught the importance of perfect obedience, and of combined and instantaneous action. It is not a game where brute strength alone avails: a keen intelligence and an indomitable courage must characterize a successful foot ball player, just as it must a successful general. Foot ball is no game for a fool! To the initiate the struggling mass of men on the gridiron may appear senseless—a man exhibitions of brute force, but a slight knowledge of the game reveals intricate combinations for offence and defense, quick moving and shifting like the colors in a kaleidoscope. The man with the ball goes down, and a mass of humanity are piled on top of him—that is all the casual looks on see, and from such on looks we hear that foot ball is a dangerous game. But stop a moment my friend, it may be rough but not dangerous. It is rough that is, its attractive charm to young America, and a good many older Americans too. The heavy falls, the piling up one on top of the other, while they might damage you don't hurt these young fellows who are trained and hardened to it. But you say: "Some students up North were killed while playing the game." Did you notice in the paper also that a sailing party was drowned near Mobile: that Lieutenant Dan Greene and his wife skated into an air hole and were drowned; that Dr. John Hopkinson, the renowned physicist, was killed by a fall from the Alpin slope: that in Chicago a couple of bicyclists collided and one was fatally injured, and to cap all, an old gentleman engaged in the proper and dignified game of croquet, stepped on a ball, and injured his spine. You did not notice these: or, if you did, are accidents in these sports so common as compared to those in the much-abused foot ball as to pass unmentioned upon even by you?

I need not carry the argument further. Accidents—even deaths—occur almost daily in almost every department of sport or pleasure; but if we should summarize all the accidents that occur in foot ball, compare them with equally serious accidents in other sports, I believe the percent would be greater in favor of the former. I admit that for an outsider without previous training preparation to step into the gridiron and engage with men who have had the necessary preparation of, say a month of training experience, would go very hard with him, but what you see the average foot ball man endure, has through a process of hardening become entirely normal. Such physical hardness lasts a man through life. The art of falling without injuring, the ability to swiftly combine thought and action; these facilities acquired during a foot ball season never entirely desert the old players. Three months of foot ball is like a dip into the fabled fountain of eternal youth.

Some of my readers may smile and accuse me of being a foot ball enthusiast. So long as the game of foot ball helps to make better

man out of our students, stronger in body, more accurate in mind—men full of energy, enthusiasm, and an indomitable personal courage; men not easily downed by obstacles or opposition; who control their tempers and restrain their appetites, who can deal honorably with a vanquished adversary, and can take victory moderately and defeat without bitterness; so long as I believe that the game of foot ball does help to make this kind of a man will I feel honored by the title of a "foot ball enthusiast." And as long as foot ball properly controlled and regulated helps the student in his college duties, instead of hindering him: gives zest and pleasure to college life, make name and fame for the college on account of victories won, not only by skill and prowess of the team on the gridiron, but by their gentlemanly conduct in the streets of the town where they play, in the hotel where they quarter, and on the trains; so long as it helps to bring about a closer bond of sympathy between students and members of the faculty by creating an interest from the routine duties—so long as in all these ways the best interest of this and other schools are advanced, and the cause of education aided in its highest mission, which is to make the best men out of the material at hand, so long will I say for the game of foot ball, long may it live and prosper.

## OPENING OF UNIVERSITY

From First Page

At the closing of the exercises, President of the University, Dr. Andrew Sledd made the announcement that the State Board of Education had established a free scholarship to be known as "The Trustee scholarship," that the faculty had established another to be known as "The Gainesville Board of Trade still another to be known as "The Gainesville scholarship." Each of these scholarships has a face valuation of \$100. He also stated that the Board of Control had named the two buildings already completed "Thomas Hall" and "Buckman Hall" in honor of the two gentlemen of those names. In the evening the young people of the city enjoyed themselves by having a grand ball in the Opera House.

## INHERITANCE

Lo, what am I? A patch of things, Mere odds and ends of lives flung by, From age-long rag-bag gatherings Pieced up by Fate full thrifflily, Somebody's worn-out will and wit, Somebody's habits and his hair, Discarded conscience, faith once fair Ere time, the moth, had eaten it; My great-grandfather's chin and nose, The eyes my great-grandmother wore, And hands from some remote—who knows?—Perchance, prehensile ancestor; Somebody's style, somebody's gait, Another body's wrist and waist, With this one's temper, that one's trait, One's tastes, another's lack of taste; Feelings I never chose to feel, A voice in which I had no voice, Revealing where I would conceal Rude impulses without a choice; Faults which this forefather or that Unkindly fostered, to my ill, With others some one else begat And made the matter worse still, They chose, these masters of my fate, To please themselves, bequeathing me Base pleasures in the things I hate, Liking for what misliketh me, Out of the ashes of their fires, Out of the fashion of their bone, They fashioned me, my mighty sires, And shall I call my soul my own? Ay, borrowed husk, head, heart, and hand, Slave on and serve me till we die! I am your Lord and your command! But only God knows—what am I. [Grace Ellery Channing.

## Death of Evangelist Sam Jones.

Sam P. Jones of Cartersville, Ga., preacher, lecturer and noted Evangelist, died suddenly Monday morning while on a train of the Oklahoma, Choctaw and Gulf Railroad traveling to Little Rock, Arkansas, near the small town of Perry. His death was an exact fulfillment of a prophecy of his, as he had often said in his sermons that he would die either while in a pulpit or on a train. As a newspaper writer his reputation was second only to his renown as an Evangelist. Mr. Jones was filling an engagement with a lyceum bureau at the time of his death and this would have brought him to Florida during the winter. Mrs. Jones and daughters were with him at the time.

## Asiatic Squadron Strengthened.

Washington, Oct. 16.—President Roosevelt's idea of strongly reinforcing the naval forces of the United States in Asiatic waters was accomplished when the special service squadron, consisting of the West Virginia, Colorado, Pennsylvania and Maryland, left Suez for the Orient.

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